

September 2, 2008

Office of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
C/O Assemblymember Jim Beall, Jr.
California State Capitol, Room 5016
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor:

I am writing to express my support for Assembly Bill 1887 (Beall), the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Parity Bill. This bill requires health insurers to cover mental health and substance abuse illnesses just as they would for any physical illness. Your signature on this bill would benefit an estimated 4 million insured Californians who suffer from mental health disorders or addiction yet find they are unable to obtain treatment through their medical coverage.

As an employer, I support AB 1887 because it keeps employees healthy and productive. Limiting mental health and substance abuse treatment can increase an employer's non-behavioral direct and indirect healthcare costs and increases the number of sick days taken by employees suffering from these disorders.

A National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency study of nine New Jersey industries found alcohol and substance abuse costs businesses \$2 billion in health care costs for employees who suffered a range of addiction-related illnesses. These industries also lost another \$1 billion due to absenteeism and decreased productivity caused by problem drinking.

AB 1887 is a cost-effective way for businesses to save money by allowing their employees to get the full scope of the medical care and treatment they deserve. And, the price is cheap: the annual increase to premiums amounts to less than what you would pay for four cups of coffee at Starbucks.

AB 1887 makes employees healthy and productive while saving taxpayers and businesses billions of dollars. I urge you to sign AB 1887 into law.

Sincerely,

Name
Business
Address